Section I: Introduction – Welcome to NT4CM – Information, Tools, and Resources (Screen Captures)

Objectives

➢ Workshop overview

➢ Present college.gov Web site and discuss goals of the site

➢ Provide college.gov demo

➢ Discuss ways counselors and mentors can help get the word out about college.gov

Materials

➢ PowerPoint Presentation with screen captures of college.gov, including home page, main interior pages and roadmap. If you will have access to the Internet during the presentation, use the Instructor's Guide and PowerPoint versions entitled "Internet."

Trainer Tips

➢ The instructor's guide provides a detailed script. If you feel more comfortable presenting the material using the PowerPoint presentation, feel free to do so.

➢ Visit college.gov to preview the Web site

Section I: Introduction – to Workshop and to www.college.gov

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I. Introduction

Welcome to the second annual National Training for Counselors and Mentors! Today's workshop will give you the information, tools and resources you need to counsel students and their families.

During the workshop, we will discuss:

- An overview of financial aid

- How to apply for federal financial aid

  - Using *FAFSA4caster*, and

  - Completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, commonly known as the *FAFSA*

- The Academic Competitiveness Grants (ACG)

- Scholarship searches and how to avoid scams and fraud

- State and institutional aid

- Resources available to you

For each of the topics we discuss today, your *Participant Guide* includes relevant handouts and copies of PowerPoint presentations, with room for you to take notes. Behind the resource tabs at the end of your materials you will find lists of Web sites and other resources that we believe you will find helpful.

Additional resources are available to you on the www.fsa4counselors.ed.gov Web site. We will discuss resources in more detail at the end of the workshop.

College.gov
- New resource from U.S. Department of Education
- Launched in September 2008
- Engage, inform, inspire students
- "I'm going" theme of empowerment
- Overcome belief that college is out of reach

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College.gov
Before we begin the overview of federal student aid, I want to take a few minutes to show you a new resource for students and their families and counselors: college.gov

- Created by the U.S. Department of Education

- Launched to the public in September 2008

- Developed to **engage**, **inform** and **inspire** students to believe they can continue education beyond high school while providing clear, manageable action steps for moving forward

- Site's theme is "I'm going," a declaration of empowerment, determination and dedication to pursue education beyond high school

- Many students do not believe they can go to college for a variety of reasons

  ➢ Lack of support

  ➢ Financial concerns

  ➢ Absence of role models

  ➢ Inability to access the information they need to prepare

- College.gov was created in response to these concerns

- The site's design and content were developed based on feedback and input from students

- College.gov's target audience is all students with an emphasis on students in grades 9-12, especially students who have not previously considered education beyond high school

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College.gov Campaign Goals

- **Engage** students through the use of graphics, messages, testimonials and social networking options that appeal to them

- **Inform** students about what they need to do to plan and pay for college

- **Inspire** more students to want to go to college and believe they can pursue a higher education, particularly students who didn't believe they could go to college

  - ➢ Through exposure to the site's inspirational messaging and practical guidance for preparing and paying for college, students will see that college is within their reach

  - ➢ Students will believe, "I'm going"…to college, to work toward a better future, to do more with their lives, and will be encouraged to create an aspirational "I'm going" statement

I encourage you to spend time exploring the site—but for now I want to take a few minutes to walkthrough the navigation and show you some highlights—remember the site is for students, designed in collaboration with students.

> ***Note to Instructor***: *At this point, you will give participants a demo of* college.gov. *If you have access to the Internet, use the live link to the Web site in the PowerPoint file titled* Internet. *If you do not have access to the Internet, use the PowerPoint file titled* Screen Captures*.*

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College.gov homepage

- Organization of the site

  - ➢ **Why Go:** inspiration for going to a two or four-year college, trade school or certificate program

  - ➢ **What To Do:** practical advice on preparing for college

- ➢ **How To Pay:** crucial information about understanding and finding financial aid options, including federal student aid

- Student testimonials

  - ➢ Located throughout the site, students provided inspirational testimonials—in their own words—about the paths they took to get to college

- Content for parents, teachers and counselors

➔ *Point out the links for parents/family and teachers/counselors in the top navigation.*

Main Navigation

Each of the navigation buttons contains information that students will find **inspirational** and **educational** for preparing for college.

- **Why Go:** Provides inspiration for going to college, including pursuing individual interests and personal growth, as well as boosting potential for future earnings. Deeper level pages cover:

  - ➢ Boost your earnings;

  - ➢ Find your passion;

  - ➢ Prove your potential;

  - ➢ Grow with help and support; and

  - ➢ Lift your family

- **What To Do:** Provides practical advice on preparing for college and helps students navigate the entire process: from choosing the right school, to selecting a major, applying for admission and more. Deeper level pages cover:

  - ➢ Finding schools;

  - ➢ Taking the tests;

> ➢ Applying for admission;

> ➢ Preparing now;

>> ▪ Seniors will find a month-by-month checklist for preparing for college

> ➢ Your college roadmap; and

> ➢ Need more help?

>> ▪ Provides guidance to help students find resources and support in their local community, as well as at the state and national levels

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- **How To Pay:** Provides crucial information about understanding and finding financial aid options, including federal student aid. Deeper level pages cover:

> ➢ Getting the basics;

> ➢ Learning what's available;

> ➢ Being money smart; and

> ➢ Applying for federal student aid

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Cool Features on the Site

1. Customizable Roadmap

- Under "What To Do"

- Provides steps a student should take each year to prepare for college

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- Student can personalize the roadmap by changing it's look and colors and providing their name, college of choice and inspirational messages, including an "I'm going" statement

- Can be saved as the student's computer background, or printed as a wall poster

2. Customizable homepage and social networking (note this feature is scheduled for late fall 2008)

• Under the homepage

• Students can create a personalized billboard that can be featured on college.gov's home page. Students create the billboard by uploading a photograph of themselves along with their "I'm going" statement.

• Once the billboard is created, students can:

  ➢ Have their billboard featured on college.gov's home page

  ➢ Send a link to their personal billboard to family, friends and other supporters (they will be provided a unique URL that links to the college.gov home page with their billboard)

  ➢ Add their billboard to their Facebook profile page

• Students can become fans of college.gov through its fan page on Facebook

3. Career discovery tool *(note this feature scheduled for late fall 2008)*

• Students will take an assessment of their strengths and interests by answering a series of questions about themselves

• Will help students identify potential career options suited to their interests and personalities, along with possible courses of study

How You Can Help

• I hope you agree that this is a site that will help inspire and motivate students to plan and prepare for college

• We need the help of counselors and mentors to get the word out

> ➢ Encourage students to go to college.gov

> ➢ Encourage students to interact with the site and create their own inspirational "I'm going" statement

> ➢ Encourage parents to go to college.gov too

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Any questions before we move on to the overview of the federal student aid programs?